SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I am going to move a motion. I am sure the Ruling Party appreciates the gravity of the situation arising from the steep rise in the price of fertilisers. It is not particular to Andhra Pradesh. I, therefore, request the ruling party Members to cooperative with us. The House should not be divided on this issue. The Leader of the House decide. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Sir, this is an important issue concerning the farming community. There is no question of party considerations in this. (*Interruptions*)... We would like to discuss this issue. There is urgency in the matter. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: Question hour should not be suspended. (*Interruptions*)...

THE LEADER OF THE HOUSE (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): Sir, the Budget proposals are being discussed in this House and these are issues which the hon'ble Members can definitely raise when the Budget is being discussed. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: There is large-scale violence. I am talking about that. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true we are talking about the Budget proposals. This has nothing to do with the Budget. (*Interruptions*)... Farmers are shot down. (*Interruptions*)...

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Contrary to the directive of the Union Government... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI: We cannot suspend the Question Hour like this. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: Sir, I do not want to get the House divided. (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are you moving the motion or not? (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: No. (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I go by the Rules. (*Interruptions*)... Under Rule 267 I have permitted you to move the motion. If you don't move the motion, it is your business. Then you don't want to suspend the Question Hour. (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: No, please. (*Interruptions*)..Do you want the House divided? I know many written rules. (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I cannot do anything. (*Interruptions*)... You wanted the suspension of Question Hour. I permitted because that permission I have to give. I have given permission to you to move the motion. (*Interruptions*)... Suspension of Question Hour can be done according to Rules and according to those Rules I have permitted you to move the motion. If you don't want to move the motion, well and good. If you don't want suspension, the Question Hour goes on. Question No. 241. (*Interruptions*)...

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Bank police force to prevent bank dacoities

*241. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had earlier considered a proposal to set up a Bank Police Force in view of the ever increasing bank dacoities all over the country;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the non-implementation of the proposal; and

(c) whether Government would make fresh reappraisal of the proposal in view of the grave situation facing the banks in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN

THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) and (b) The feasibility of organising a bank security force with a view to improving security of banks was examined by a Committee set up in 1982. However, organising a Bank Security Force was not found feasible by the Committee which recommended that the existing practice of separate security organisations for each Nationalised Bank be continued.

(c) The Banking Division of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance have reported that they have no fresh proposal under consideration.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Sir, this is a most inhuman answer that we get in the House as far as the human rights are concerned. The answer speaks volumes about the lack of concern and lack of understanding on the part of the hon'ble Minister of the grave danger that the bank employees are facing due to lack of proper security measures and killing of the bank employees in the country is increasing day by day. It shows how honourable these bank employees are. So, in the face of this grave situation where the survival of human lives is concerned, I want to ask the hon'ble Minister: Why does the Minister raise the question of feasibility? What is the Committee referred to in the answer sheet? Is the said Committee sufficiently competent to say it is not feasible when many bank employees have been killed within a span of five years? May I know precisely what positive grounds he needs to raise a bank protection force? Does the hon'ble Minister consider that the lives of bank employees can be kept at the mercy of the killers?

SHRI M. M. JACOB: The question of protection of banks was considered by a committee called the Varadan Committee set up in 1982. The Committee considered in depth the necessity for a bank security force. After examining all aspects of the question and the set-up of the various banks the Committee felt that since they were all either nationalised banks or private banks, it would not be possible for the Government as such to organise a bank protection force in the general. Therefore, the Committee recommended that each bank may engage its own security personnel besides the general security provided by the Government in the particular area. That was the Varadan Committee's recommendation. After that another committee headed by the Secretary assisted by some of the officers followed up the same question. They also came to the conclusion that considering the nature of the different banks situation in various parts of the country, in rural areas, it was not possible for a Central agency to give protection to everybody. So the banks agreed with that and they are giving protection to their staff themselves. They are themselves providing security in their area. Subsequently another committee was also appointed to ascertain whether vulnerable areas could eb considered separate. That committee also gave a report stating that the banks must take up the responsibility themselves. And the banks agreed to do it themselves and they have got a system for that.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Does the honourable Minister know about the new bullet resistance screen that is being used in other countries for protection from attacks? If the honourable Ministerc annot raise a bank protection force, he should at least consider introducing this enw bullet resistance screen in the banks. If there any such proposal under consideration? The bullet-proof screen can be raised for protection in a screen can be raised for protection in a fraction of a second.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: That is a suggestion worth considering if it is feasible.

SHRI ASHIS SEN: I had repeatedly raised this question in this House. Only the other day I raised this question again following what happened in the Okhla branch of a particular bank in Delhi. I mentioned about the problem in different branches of banks in vulnerable areas in Puniab. in Assam, how bank dacoities are taking place, how the dacoits come and execute their job in no time. I also raised the question of bank protection force. It is absolutely necessary...

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your question?

SHRI ASHIS SEN: My question is this. Today the bank managements have been asked to have their own security arrangements for giving protection to their staff and the treasury. If big rifles have to be handled by the security staff, it will be impossible for the security staff to check the dacoits who swiftly operate with small weapons. So it is absolutely necessary that banks have a foolproof protection force. Leaving it to the banks alone will not do. So far as the major branches or the zonal branches are concerned, they may perhaps be able to look after their security themselves. But what about the small branches of banks which are located in far flung areas, in remote rural areas? Surely they cannot be asked to look after their own security. So will the Government be prepared to provide a special force for protection of the bank employees and the treasuries of the banks because banks are very important for the economic development of our country? So for as the banks situated in remote and outlying areas are concerned, will the Government agree to providing a Central force?

SHRI M. M. JACOB: I accept that the honourable Member is keenly concerned, as any of us, about the protection of bank staff. But the problem is...

SHRI ASHIS SEN: I also mentioned about protection of the bank treasuries, not staff alone. The Central Government is responsible for that.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Thank you. That is why I mentioned earlier in my reply that all the committees constituted to go into this particular matter and also the special meeting attended by the directors of the nationalised banks and other banks and the Directors-General of Police of various States, all of them recommended certain modalities to be followed. And none of them came to the conclusion that there should be a protection force for the country as a whole. All of them thought that the banks themselves must take up the responsibility. One thing I must tell you: We have suggested in the committees and the bank owners also know this— Banks, particularly in the vulnerable areas were asked to have an alarm-bell or some such mechanism, connected with the nearest police station or the survelliance corps so that the police could reach there immediately. But in this particular case there was no alarm-bell connected. Had it been there, I am sure the incident could have been averted to some extent. As the hon. Member suggested, I do not think it would be possible to have a bank protection force for all the banks in India. After nationalisation we have opened a large number of branches and these are located in remote villages and far-flung areas. We have about 56 per cent of the branches in the rural areas and hence providing protection to these banks would be difficult. Of course, police stations are there at these places and yet in case we are to have two or three people deputed to see to the security of the banks, who is there to supervise their work? How do we control them? We do have the Industrial Security Force to protect the industries, but I am afraid we cannot have a similar one for the banks.

SHRI ASHIS SEN: Sir, either the Minister has not noted my point or he has just by passed it. I had mentioned that in the major industrial areas and the big offices, banks could be entrusted with this responsibility. I specifically talked of those 60 per cent of the banks which are located in the rural areas and where there is no police station either ...(*Interruptions*)... as he is dreaming of.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is what he is saying, that it is not possible to do it in the distant areas...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ASHIS SEN: Then what is to be done? Should we be left at the mercy of the decoits?...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Is that the message from the Union Minister...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: I do not know what is right. I only communicated to you what he said...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI ASHIS SEN: But he is by passing the main issue ... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is his business. Now, Kumari Chandrika Premji Kenia.

KUMARI CHANDRIKA PREMJI KENIA: Sir, from the Statement showing the number of incidents of bank decoity and bank robbery in various States for the years 1988-89 and 1989-90, I find that there are a few States which are very much prone to bank robberies and decoities. States like Bihar, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab have recorded the maximum incidents of bank robbery. These are the areas where security environment is in danger and the law and order situation is bad. In spite of the special efforts taken by the Government to protect the banks like deploying the paramilitary forces and having appropriate alarm system, I find the number of incidents has not come down. In fact in States like Punjab and Bihar, they have actually increased. Would the Government consider taking some special measures in respect of these States?

SHRI M. M. JACOB: In Punjab and the North-Eastern regions ... (*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: She said Punjab and Bihar.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Punjab has been provided with a special protection force as it is a terrorist-affected area. In spite of these special efforts these things have been happening. We are constantly on the look-out as to how we can improve the security arrangements in Punjab. Sir, as regards Bihar, the number of cases reported is really very high. I think the total figure is about 109 during the past year... (*Interruptions*)... The only thing that could be done is that the Bihar Government should give sufficient protection to its banks as best as they can. The Central Government has not thought of any special scheme for Bihar so far.

KUMARI CHANDRIKA PREMJI KENIA: What about Punjab?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already said that they are doing whatever they can for the State. But they have not succeeded. Anyway, that is another story. Mr. Ratnakar Pandey.

डा रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : माननीय सभापति जी, मंत्री महोदय ने जो उत्तर दिया है वह नकारात्मक है । लेकिन जैसे बार्डर सैक्युरिटी फोर्स है और जिस तरह से इंडस्ट्रियल फोर्स जो होम मिनिस्ट्री की है, आए दिन देखने में आता है कि जहां रुपया है वहीं समाज के बिगडे हुए लोग जो अपने प्राणों की बाजी लगा कर के लूट करते हैं और रुपया बैंक का लूटते हैं, 1982 में गठित एक समिति का हवाला दिया है । मंत्री महोदय ने बड़े विस्तार से बताया है, लेकिन सारा सदन यह विश्वास करता है और संसदीय राजभाषा समिति के सदस्य के रूप में हम लोगों को बैंकों को देखने का मौका मिला है, तो जैसे बैंकिंग रिक्रूटमेंट बोर्ड है, उसी तरह से सारे सदन की भावना को ध्यान में रखकर आप पुनः विचार करें और एक बैंकिंग सेक्युरिटी फोर्स बनाया जाए क्योंकि बैंकों में सबसे अधिक एम्प्लाईज हैं, करोड़ों की संख्या में हैं इसलिए वह मैनेज कर सकते हैं । आपने जैसे इंडस्ट्रियल रिक्रूटमेंट फोर्स बनाया है होम मिनिस्ट्री के तहत तो क्या आप उस तरह विचार करने के लिए तैयार हैं । मान्य र, सारा धन वैभव और संपदा बैंकों में रहती है और उसकी सुरक्षा के लिए एक फोर्स तैयार किया जाना जरूरी है, इसलिए बैंकिंग डिवीजन इस पर पुनर्विचार करे, आपका गृह मंत्रालय पुनर्विचार करे और कोई चीज सामने लाए क्या आप इसके लिए तैयार हैं ?

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Sir, the suggestion is very vital. But the problems are also really important because of the fact that, as I mentioned earlier, to provide security to the banks, you cannot isolate one or two protection forces in order to give protection to the banks. It has to be a system under which there should be facilities for supervision by a superior offices and for controlling them. Putting one or two security guards in the hands of the manager locally also will invite another problem.

डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : अगर सारे नेशनलाइज्ड बैंक्स आपसे रिक्वेस्ट करते हैं, तो क्या आप तैयार हैं?

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Sir, if the banks are prepared to foot the bill, it is a note proposal and we have to consider it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Balaram.

SHRI N. E. BALARAM: Sir, I am not suggesting setting up of a special security force for the banks. Now, there are certain areas considered very vulnerable. So, special protection has to be given to these areas. What is the idea of the Government with regard to giving special protection to such areas? I am asking this question because the Minister was saying that the thinking of management of the banks was that they would manage their security. But what happened in Okhla was that the robbers first shot down all the security people and then they entered the banks and attacked all the employees. So, it has been proved that the banks cannot have their own security people. Since there are certain very vulnerable areas. I would like to know from the Minister what special measures the Government is proposing to take for the protection of the banks and bank employees in such areas.

SHRI M. M. JACOB: Sir, twice the Government had sent special instructions to the concerned States and asked them to follow certain formalities in this connection. For example, the last one was on the 3rd June 1991, The Home Secretary issued instructions to the Chief Secretaries of Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura and Punjab in which they were informed of what steps the banks should take and the State Governments also should take. But some places we have found, particularly in vulnerable areas, that when you carry cash from one bank to another. dacoities take place. Therefore, we have to provide the support of security personnel and CRPF men are also to be deployed for this purpose. These things happen in the banks in certain vulnerable areas. We have informed them of the use of wire net, etc. and certain other parameters of protection are also given in the guidelines and these guidelines are passed on to the Chief Secretaries and they are adhering to them as far as our information goes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 242.

Proposal to meter the local calls every three minutes

*242. SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA:†

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MTNL has sent a proposal to Government of India to meter the local calls in Delhi and Bombay every three minutes per calls; and

(b) if so, what are the arguments in support of the proposal and Govt.'s reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P. V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The proposed scheme is to meter the local call once in 3 minutes. Timed metering of local calls is expected to encourage the subscribers to limit the duration of calls thereby enabling the common equipment available to carry more traffic. The Exchanges will get decongested and the call completion rate is likely to increase leading to greater subscriber satisfaction.

The proposal is under consideration of the Government.

श्री राम सिंह राठवा : माननीय सभापति जी, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या सरकार ने इस प्रस्ताव को लाने से पहले पार्लियामेंटरी कंसलटेटिव कमेटी के साथ या दूसरे कोई संगठन के साथ या दूसरी संस्थाओं के साथ टेलीफोन

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Ramsinh Rathwa.